

[2 August, 2001]

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in the region, which was witnessing the rise of extremist forces, terrorism and increased flow of illicit drugs.

Russian stand on N.M.D. System

1274. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of **EXTERNAL AFFAIRS** be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during recent visit Russian Foreign Minister to New Delhi, Government discussed its stand generally welcoming the US-President's plan to deploy a National Missile Defence (NMD) system;

(b) if so, what was the Russian stand with respect to the US plan for an NMD system and what was the outcome of the discussions in regard to the impact of the NMD Plan on World Peace and the Non-Proliferation regime; and

(c) whether the US statement in question has added that the US has no intention of taking a unilateral decision and intends to hold consultations with Russia, China and India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) During talks, Foreign Minister Ivanov comprehensively explained Russia's views on President Bush's Statement of 1st May 2001 and added, in that context, that the Indian and Russian "approaches mostly coincide". He said that Russia welcomed consultations launched by the US and looked forward to meetings with the US with proposals of its own, including President Putin's comprehensive proposal about reductions in strategic offensive weapons and ballistic missile defences. India stated that the 1972 ABM Treaty should not be abrogated unilaterally.

(c) Yes, Sir. These consultations have subsequently been held during the months of May and June, and may continue.